

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. An H.323 client terminal, comprising:
  - 2 a first H.323 controller configured to handle call and control signaling during a
  - 3 media communication with another H.323 client terminal via a first gatekeeper;
  - 4 a second H.323 controller (110b) configured to handle call and control
  - 5 signaling directly with another client terminal;
  - 6 wherein said second H.323 controller (110b) provides redundant H.323
  - 7 call and control signaling for said media connection while said first H.323
  - 8 controller provides call and control signaling for said media connection via said
  - 9 first gatekeeper, and said second H.323 controller provides call and control
  - 10 signaling for said media connection directly with another client terminal if said
  - 11 first gatekeeper fails.
- 1 2. An H.323 client terminal, in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first
  - 2 H.323 controller and said second H.323 controller are configured to provide a
  - 3 same globally unique call identifier (GUID) to said first gatekeeper and said
  - 4 second client terminal.
- 1 3. An H.323 client terminal, in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first
  - 2 H.323 controller and said second H.323 controller are configured to provide a
  - 3 globally unique call identifier (GUID) to said second client terminal that is different
  - 4 but can be associated in a known way with a globally unique call identifier
  - 5 presented to said first gatekeeper.
- 1 4. A communication client terminal for use in a network having separate
  - 2 signaling and media channels, comprising:
    - 3 a first controller configured to handle call signaling during a media
    - 4 communication with another client terminal via a first gatekeeper;
    - 5 a second controller configured to handle call signaling directly with another
    - 6 client terminal;

7 wherein said second controller provides redundant signaling for said  
8 media connection while said first controller provides call signaling for said media  
9 connection via said first gatekeeper, and said second controller provides said call  
10 signaling for said media connection directly if said first gatekeeper fails.

1 5. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein  
2 said first controller and said second controller are configured to provide a same  
3 unique call identifier to said first gatekeeper and said second client terminal.

1 6. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein  
2 said first controller and said second controller are configured to provide a unique  
3 call identifier to said second client terminal that is different from, but can be  
4 associated in a known way, with a unique call identifier presented to said first  
5 gatekeeper.

1 7. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein  
2 said communications client terminal comprises an H.323 client terminal.

1 8. A communications client terminal, in accordance with claim 4, wherein  
2 said communications client terminal operates in a network having separate  
3 media and signaling channels.

1 9. A telecommunications system, having separate media and signaling  
2 channels, comprising:  
3 a packet-switched network;  
4 a plurality of client terminals coupled to said packet switched network;  
5 a plurality of gatekeepers coupled to said packet switched network;  
6 wherein the plurality of client terminals are configured to establish primary  
7 signaling connections with one another via a first of said plurality of gatekeepers,  
8 and redundant signaling connections with one another directly while maintaining  
9 a single media connection such that if said primary gatekeeper fails, said media

10 connection is maintained with said redundant signaling connection.

1 10. A telecommunications system according to claim 9, wherein said client  
2 terminals are configured to establish signaling via another of said plurality of  
3 gatekeepers while control signaling is being provided directly by said redundant  
4 signaling connection.

1 11. A telecommunications system according to claim 9, wherein a  
2 predetermined number, less than a total number, of said plurality of client  
3 terminals are equipped to establish said gatekeeper routed primary and direct,  
4 non-gatekeeper routed redundant signaling connections.

1 12. A telecommunications system according to claim 11, wherein at least one  
2 of said predetermined number of said plurality of client terminals are configured  
3 to search for a back-up gatekeeper if said first gatekeeper fails while a signaling  
4 channel is maintained by said redundant signaling connection.

1 13. A telecommunications system, according to claim 9, wherein said packet-  
2 switched network comprises an H.323 network and said client terminals comprise  
3 H.323 clients and said gatekeepers comprise H.323 gatekeepers.

1 14. A telecommunications system, according to claim 9, wherein said packet-  
2 switched network comprises a network having separate media and signaling  
3 channels.